

**YOU CAN PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL
STRATEGIES – HERE'S HOW:**

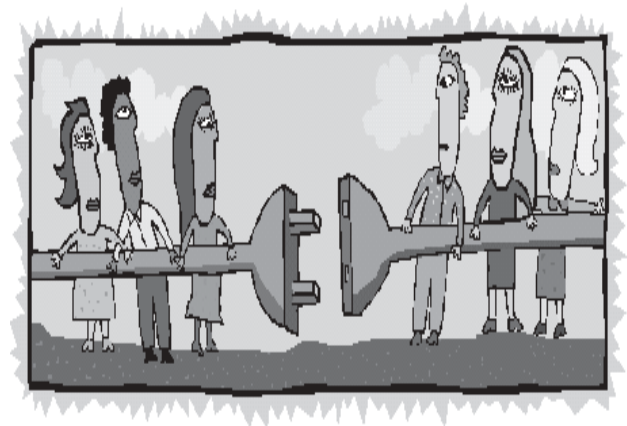
- Be a positive role model with regards to substance use.
- Speak out when you see advertising that targets youth audiences for tobacco and alcohol use. This includes advertising at events, in print media and TV and radio.
- Interpret the media messages that your children see and teach them to recognize how the media sells products.
- If you know a business did not sell to minors during a compliance check compliment them on doing a good job.
- Question the businesses you patronize about their commitment to not serving/selling to minors (this includes restaurants, convenience stores, grocery stores).
- Support your local government and law enforcement agencies with their enforcement efforts as well as zoning and other regulatory or policy efforts.
- Encourage your place of employment to develop a workplace drug policy including tobacco and alcohol policies.
- Get involved with local coalitions, start your own group, and support RED RIBBON WEEK (last week in October) activities.
- GET INVOLVED and TALK TO YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS it's your chance to change the substance abuse environment for the better.

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**Substance Abuse
Prevention -**

Environmental Strategies



*Making
the Connection*

Environmental strategies are designed to reduce or eliminate substance abuse by making changes in the environment in which tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs are used. Environmental strategies involve changing policies, regulations and social norms to affect the access, availability and use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs in the community.

When most people talk about substance abuse prevention, they are usually referring to programs that are designed to change an individual's attitudes or behavior about substance use. **Environmental strategies seek to change the social context where drugs, tobacco or alcohol are used.**

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES

- **ORGANIZING** in the community to promote support for and implementation of environmental intervention that change attitudes, norms, policies, laws and regulations affecting substance abuse;
- **EDUCATING AND COMMUNICATING**, through community organizations, institutions and mass media about environmental interventions, reinforcing knowledge, attitude and behavior changes associated with them;
- **REGULATING** substance abuse by creating or changing public or private policies (e.g., standards, regulations, laws, school or workplace policies);
- **ENFORCING** more fully or more effectively the policies that already exist.



WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES?

- **BROAD REACH** – environmental interventions can reach entire populations at one time.
- **SUBSTANTIAL EFFECTS** – addressing environmental factors can produce highly significant results, and can support individual skills-based approaches.
- **IMMEDIATE AND ENDURING EFFECTS** – protective effects of a law or policy change can be immediate, are long lasting and self-sustaining with minimal additional effort.
- **COST EFFECTIVENESS AND EASE OF MAINTENANCE** – although there are some costs associated with implementation and maintenance these interventions may still be more cost effective than the education, service and therapeutic efforts applied to individuals.

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES FOR ALCOHOL

- Increasing alcohol taxes to reduce availability of alcohol products
- Restricting physical availability of alcohol by limiting hours of operation and outlet density
- Strengthening and more aggressively enforcing drinking and driving laws (compliance checks and roadside checks)
- Conducting responsible beverage service training

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING TOBACCO USE

- Creating and enforcing regulations to prohibit sale of tobacco to minors (compliance checks)
- Increasing tobacco taxes to alter economic availability of tobacco products to youth
- Creating “Tobacco-Free” environments in communities
- Implementing media strategies including counteradvertising campaigns, bans on tobacco advertising in places frequented by youth, and sponsorship of youth events

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING ILLICIT DRUG USE

- Curtailing neighborhood retail drug markets through citizen surveillance
- Altering the physical environment (anti-drug rallies to kick-off community clean-up efforts, renovating and cleaning up around old buildings)
- Implementing civil anti-drug remedies such as “nuisance abatement” actions against property owners from which drugs are being sold, enforcement of local housing codes, zoning laws or health codes is designed to pressure property owners to clean up the location.
- Creating “drug-free zones” for youth and mobilizing community to work together to post signs, and generate publicity.
- Youth curfews